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AWAY FROM ARMAGEDDON TOWARD A NEW HUMANITY

"What does it mean to guard peace at the present time?" This was the discussion theme presented on Feb. 4 by professor ISHIDA Takeshi of Tokyo University to members of the NCCJ Peace Committee at the Christian Center in Tokyo. As support for the peace constitution is fading away in the whirlpool of political intrigue, Christians are learning to speak out against the uselessness of the arms race. The following is an excerpted translation of Mr. Ishida's speech on this subject and of the discussion that followed.

At the present time when constitutional revision is the subject of current debate in the Diet, mere support for Japan's constitution is not adequate for building a lasting peace. Peace education must be carried on outside the grade oriented and motivated school curriculum and not through existing organizations that are politically polarized, but where more people are involved in the learning process through disciplined group participation. The ideal is one in which a core group for peace research is mobilized, to develop from its traditional isolation into a movement which promotes peace activities among growing circles of people. If the core group is only motivated out of its own religious beliefs, it does not generate an active movement that includes many people, nor does it have persuasive power within society.

Peace promotion within a context of national defense brings up several points for consideration. National defense which precludes invasion of other countries obviously means that any battlefield for defensive purposes will be in Japan. This would give rise to a situation similar to that in Okinawa during World War II when US and Japanese troops fought on the ground and more civilians were killed than soldiers.

Where there is a population density as intense as in Japan there are no military strategies nor arms transportation systems that do not involve the killing of civilians. The very face of the superpowers has proved that the matter of national security is psychological, in that nations never feel secure until they build up assurance that they have more weapons than all others.

From past experience we know that military organizations are created for professional murder. The training of effective militarists involves the rearing of young people who will carry out this murder without concern for the human rights of others; it is based on a de-humanizing value system. Thus, the problem does not lie in an increase of the military budget to one per cent of the national budget. Rather, the danger lies in the fact that a professional murder organization is being used at all.

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(Away from Armageddon...)

What we need is the united will of a people who are disciplined to act for peace in order to accomplish national protection without arms. Furthermore we must understand fully the meaning of the state, when we talk about national defense. What is the meaning of the state when it is oriented toward protecting not the whole populace but only the elite? Why are the war dead enshrined in a Shinto shrine but not the atomic bomb victims?

Public opinion surveys indicate that certain kinds of fortune tellers are enjoying a booming business while the number of people professing religious faith is decreasing. This situation is similar to the social situation that existed before WW II. The danger in this invasive social trend lies in the fact that human beings come to accept a society that embraces no humanizing value system. Another danger inherent in the military orientation is the nihilistic thinking that discriminates against the disabled and the weak. All people have the right to live in peace.

Peace education should be considered along with social welfare as a means of raising human rights awareness. When we recognize oppressive forces in society and take part in specific actions to abolish them, we will come to realize that human rights are universal. This is peace-creating involvement. We need discipline in order to grasp the universality of human rights in which all people are valued and are allowed to use their abilities.

Ever since the Korean War Japan has been accused of being a "free rider" among the allied nations since her military efforts have not been significant on the international level. Japan must proclaim and move in the direction of being a "freedom rider" and build a nuclear-free zone.

As Japan's economic oppression extends to other parts of Asia our task is to see the situation from the position of the oppressed and make efforts to prevent such domination from extending all the way to the lowliest in society where the majority could be completely suppressed. When we Japanese are both victims of oppression and at the same time the oppressor, we must realize this and take concrete action for peace building. #

NCCJ DISCUSSES DIRECTION OF WORK

For the first time the 12 denomination heads of the member churches of the National Christian Council of Japan met with five representatives of NCCJ on Feb. 4 to discuss the church's task in the world today. Those who attended were Primate Bishop NAKAMICHI Yoshio, Japan Seiko Kai; MORI Tsutomu, Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church; KANO Masahiro, Japan Baptist Union; KIM Kun Shi, Korean Church in Japan; KANEKO Sumio, Japan Baptist Convention, USHIROKU Toshiro and NAKAJIMA Masaki, the Kyodan. K. SHIMOTO Yoichi, KOMINAMI Shoichi, In H. LEE, ISHIKI Yoshiko and SHOJI Tsutomu represented the NCCJ. The newly elected General Secretary of NCC in Korea, KIM So Young also joined with a greeting from the Korean church.

Some gave their opinions about NCC activities which tend to be oriented toward social issues, while the churches in Japan tend to limit their interest in evangelical activities. They especially pointed out that within each denomination churches often split between those who emphasize social issues and others who are mostly interested in increasing church membership. The majority expressed the belief that social witness and evangelical work are both sides of the mission of the church, pointing out that the Gospel must be spread among people by our being involved in the issues of social justice and human rights.

Some said that relating ourselves to social issues is extremely important for the growth of our faith. The crisis of church division could be overcome by discussing the matter in a trust relationship between the minister and the congregation. In this kind of discussion we must be aware of the importance of taking time to handle the matter adequately. Being involved in social issues deepens the meaning of our lives as Christians in the world, nurtured in specific situations, they concluded.

Cooperation in mission and the fostering of church unity was also presented. It was suggested that NCCJ make efforts to bring about unity within the church. The more the difficulty of unity was expressed the more the participants in the meeting felt its necessity. There are good examples of the cooperation of

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CCJ Discusses Direction...)

various denominations in the work of the YMCA, the YWCA, the Japan Bible Society and the National Christian Council itself. The church must also establish operation in its ecumenical organization. Recently denominational cooperation has been experienced in the work with disabled persons and the movement protesting the nationalization of Yasukuni Shrine. The participants agreed that the ecumenical cooperation seen in these movements is a strong basis for the unity of the church.

In relation to Asia it was suggested that it is necessary to build some kind of Asian Resource Center in order to provide information related to churches in Asia and to prepare for an orientation program for missionaries who are going to work among people in other parts of Asia. The Mission for Seamen has been carried on as the work of the Seiko Kai and the Kyodan. As most of the seamen are Asians nowadays the Japanese churches must not remain distant but must open their doors to them. Since Japanese churches must not repeat the mistakes of World War II, such a Resource Center, which could house these various programs, is envisioned as a pivot point for contributing greatly to future relationships with the people of Asia. It could also bring about an effective mission to the Japanese church in connection with the churches in other parts of Asia. The participants agreed to work toward such a center through cooperative ecumenical efforts. #

HOUSE CHURCH--SCATTERED TO SERVE

by Rev. SAEKI Haruo
Miyagi Gakuin
Women's College

It was ten years ago that my wife and I started a "house church" with one congregation during the time when the established church was critically questioned and challenged. I felt that the mission of the church needed to be changed, and tried a pioneering experiment on the west side of Sendai.

A monthly meeting was started, and soon it became twice a month at the request of the congregation. Within six months it became a regular Sunday morning worship service with a little over ten in

attendance. In 1980 the house church with 40 members was recognized by the General Assembly of the Tohoku district as a Kyodan mission point.

Instead of limiting ourselves to traditional customs and trying to resemble other churches we experimented--scattered to serve--to increase fellowship and to fulfill the mission of the Gospel. The way that evangelism has often been pursued is to bring people into one place and make efforts to increase membership and offerings in order to erect a new building. Our image of the church was to increase the house meetings, following the concept that people could live there "and welcome all who come to them, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ quite openly and unhindered." (Acts 28:30-31) Whenever the members increased we divided ourselves into small groups under different leadership and the result was the uniqueness of each group. Thus, the house church meetings have developed in various directions. Scattered as each group is, we are eager to come together in a monthly meeting with other groups. Last year's Christmas service was attended by 120 people and our summer program was also well attended.

Rather than studying a Bible test and trying to apply it to the present situation, the people in the house churches are guided to learn realities of the world and to study the Bible in the way that the early Christians did. The specific events of the time were interpreted in the light of the Bible rather than by starting with the text in the Sunday service. When usual church activities are centered around the minister of the church, it tends to become a closed community.

The house church is a gathering of God's people, who live like others, confronting many problems in society and encountering the words of the Bible. We share our experiences, focusing on an examination of the life of Jesus of Nazareth. Following the steps of Jesus is our main task. Our goal is to come closer to Jesus every day through the community and to be sent out to the world.

In 1980 we started to discuss what kind of program the house meetings can carry on in the house church center in the

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(The Church--Scattered...)

future. Rather than maintaining a church building this center is to serve not only Protestants and Catholic believers, but it is also for non-Christians.

*This summary is taken
from articles which ap-
peared in "Kyodan Shinpo"
Feb. 7 and 21.*

ALIEN REGISTRATION SYSTEM CHALLENGED

Ninety percent of the foreigners who carry alien registration cards in Japan are Koreans. The purpose of this card is for the Japanese government to have all of the necessary information on each foreigner living here. When a foreigner reaches the age of 14, he or she must be fingerprinted and carry an alien registration card. Even second and third generation foreigners must carry a card.

A fourteen year old Korean girl, CHOI Song Hae, refused to be fingerprinted, along with the other members of her family early this year. "When I was a child I thought that when everyone reached adulthood, they would be fingerprinted and carry an alien registration card." Song Hae said. "But when I heard it was only the Koreans, I felt very angry." At the city office, when she was told that it was necessary to take her fingerprints, she refused, saying that it was an insult. The official replied that it wasn't an insult, only a means of administering the affairs of foreigners.

"None of my friends are fingerprinted--why only me? I was born and grew up in Japan. If I have a child, will it be fingerprinted too? How long do we have to do this?" Song Hae asked, and stood firm in her refusal.

Choi Song Hae is the daughter of Rev. CHOE Changhwa, minister of the Kokura Korean Christian Church. She attends Seinan Jogakuin, a Baptist highschool in Kokura, Kitakyushu, as a third year student. Her father has received a warning from the city office saying that he is in violation of the immigration law.

"I believe that if everyone would refuse to be fingerprinted, the law would be changed." Song Hae said. #

From Kiristo Shimbum
Feb. 7, 1981

LOOKING BACK TWENTY YEARS

Fellowship between Roman Catholic and Protestant churches is taking some concrete forms:

1. Through Church Organizations.
The Faith and Order Committee of NCCJ working with a Catholic member of the committee, has written a common translation of the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed. The Lord's Prayer is used in almost all joint meetings of Protestants and Catholics. Further research by the committee is progressing in various subjects. The Ecumenism Committee of the Catholic Church and the NCC's Mission and Service Division exchange personnel for a furtherance of mutual understanding.

The annual World Day of Prayer Service sponsored by the NCC Women's Association has also become a chance for development of the ecumenical movement. When the Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission made the Windsor Agreement for mutual participation in the Lord's Supper in 1971, various joint communion services took place at the local level in Japan.

2. Common Translation of the Bible.
Last year the Japan Bible Society published a common translation of the New Testament after many years of theological research by Catholic and Protestant scholars.

3. Study Centers.
Both NCC's Study Center for Japanese Religions and the Catholic's Oriens Institute for Religious Research exchange research touching on the mission of church in the Japanese culture.

4. Japan Ecumenical Association.
The Japan Ecumenical Association was set up 11 years ago for the purpose of church unity. It was organized by equal numbers of representatives from the Catholic and Protestant churches.

5. Prayer Efforts.
Following a joint action of WCC and the Vatican, "Prayer for Christian Unity" was carried on in January by the Japan Ecumenical Association, the NCC, and the Catholic Ecumenism Committee.

6. Prayer Breakfasts.
Among laypeople of both faiths, belief

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Looking Back...)

breakfast prayer meetings are held every week in about 100 places in the country. Meetings of ministers and priests are also held at the local level.

. Church Music Festival.

Volunteers who are interested in church music began this festival 14 years ago. The first meeting was held at St. Mary's Cathedral in Tokyo. 240 choir members from four denominations and over 1000 in the audience participated in the festival.

. Social Witness.

Two Catholic priests have been members of the NCCJ Anti-Yasukuni Committee for several years. Prayer services, press conferences and various meetings on the issues involving Korea and the Philippines have been held to strengthen joint efforts to raise awareness and to take action together.

The Christian work in the Kamagasaki slum area is another good example of an ecumenical effort. People of various denominational backgrounds are challenged by problems in this most desperate situation. Joint work for protesting sex tours to Asia and discrimination against "buraku" people are beginning an ecumenical linkage.

In the history of the church in Japan we are entering into a new era by sharing and learning others' positions and are moving forward in the true unity of our word.

-SHOJI Tsutomu

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On Feb. 24, from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. on the occasion of Pope John Paul II's visit to Japan a prayer meeting followed by fellowship between Catholic and Protestant church leaders will be held at the Vatican Embassy in Tokyo. Thirty five protestant representatives are invited to join in this meeting including the following:  
ISHIMOTO Yoichi (chairman), KOMINAMI Yoichi, In Ha LEE (Vice-chairmen), ISHII Masami (Faith and Order Committee), KIMURA Tomomi (Anti-Yasukuni Shrine Committee), SHOJI Tsutomu (General Secretary).

## POPE'S VISIT RAISES CONCERN

On Jan. 23 a letter was written to Cardinal SATOWAKI Asajiro by Rev. KISHIMOTO Yoichi, Moderator of NCCJ, expressing some concerns of the NCCJ about the coming visit of Pope John Paul II and his plan to visit the Emperor. Reasons for this concern are as follows:

1. The Emperor was considered not only the head of the State but also the figure head of the deified god until the new Constitution was promulgated in 1946. Today, according to the Constitution of Japan, the Emperor is a symbol of the State under the sovereign right of the people. However, there is a powerful thrust to recognize his godship again and to make him the sovereign head of the State.

In 1979, a law was passed in the Diet which stated that all official documents from public offices have to be signed with the year of the reign of the Emperor. This was the first official step to promote the deification of the Emperor. The movement to petition for the Emperor's official visits to worship at Yasukuni Shrine continues. We feel that there is a great danger that the Pope's visit to the Emperor at this sensitive time would be used for certain political purposes by promoters of the Emperor's deification. The meeting of the Emperor and the Pope, who is both the supreme religious and political ruler of the Vatican City State, might mislead people into the belief that the Emperor's role as head of the State supercedes the sovereignty of the people.

2. We cannot ignore our war responsibility related to the past war. We cannot forget that under Imperial rule many Christians, both Catholics and Protestants, had very bitter experiences which deprived them of their freedom of religion and expression.

Furthermore, people in many Asian countries where the Japanese military dominated were forced into Emperor worship and into joining the war by the slogan, "Equality under the grace of the Emperor." We know that the wounds of the war have not been healed. We want to emphasize that the Emperor's war responsibility has still not been cleared up. Thus, we are concerned that this unresolved

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*(Pope's Visit...)*

responsibility for the war by the Emperor would be obscured by the Pope's visit.

3. The oppressed minorities such as the "Burakumin," the Ainu and the Koreans in Japan are all discriminated against in present Japanese society. It should be noted that these people and many others believe that the oppressive system is rooted in the Emperor system itself. #

#### TOSEI NEWS CLOSED DOWN

*A letter to the editors.....*

"In answer to your inquiry, let me explain for you and your readers that on Jan. 30, subscribers to Tosei News (a newsletter for missionaries published under the auspices of the Catholic Bishops' Conference) received a communication from Cardinal SATOWAKI Of Nagasaki, President of the Bishops' Conference. The Cardinal's letter informed the subscribers that because of financial considerations, Tosei News had to be discontinued. In its place, a new monthly called Catholic News would be issued and deal solely with news of the Catholic Church in Japan.

This decision of a majority of the Bishops of Japan followed more than a year of tension and conflict between the publisher and the editorial team over the content and nature of the articles chosen for publication. It comes on the eve of the Pope's visit to Japan. Twice within the past year, the publisher's disagreement with articles chosen by the editors led him to attempt censorship. The articles in question were one on the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan in connection with the Kaoshiung Incident and the other concerned the visit of several Japanese Buddhist monks to the Philippines.

On Dec. 12 last year, one of the three co-editors, Fr. Ludo GOOSSENS, CICM, received a letter of dismissal from Fr. Andrew MATSUMURA, the publisher and Secretary-General of the Bishops' Conference. The letter of dismissal gave no reasons as to why the editor had been dismissed, although investigation by the editors indicated that certain articles had displeased church authorities.

In response to the dismissal, the co-editors sent a letter on Dec. 22 to the Conference of Major Superiors of Men exploring the action. In addition, the

letter to the Superiors was circulated to the Catholic Justice and Peace Council and Tosei's subscribers. This letter gave a history of the editors' difficult relations with the publisher and clearly stated that the issue at stake was the people's right to know what was going on in the Church. Also at stake, considering the abrupt and unjust manner Fr. Goossens' dismissal, was the Church's professed commitment to human rights.

In the face of certain action by Catholic Justice and Peace and the Major Superiors' refusal to provide a new editor, Fr. Matsumura quietly disregarded his earlier letter of dismissal, saying that the final decision rested with the bishops.

There the matter rested until the editors were informed on Jan. 15 of this year that Tosei News was being closed down and a new monthly was taking its place. The ostensible reason for closure of Tosei News was financial; however, the Cardinal himself admitted in an interview with UCA News, (a Hong Kong based Catholic publication) Feb. 4, 1981 that the major factor in closing down the newsletter was the content of the articles, not finances.

Left unresolved are the major questions of what responsibility the Catholic Church in Japan has to provide a replacement for Tosei's international scene, to report on ecumenical and interreligious relations and dialogue, and above all, the question of the content of Tosei.

The resolution of the issues involved and the answers to the questions are now in the hands of the subscribers to Tosei News.

Sr. Cheryl ALLAM,  
Former co-editor  
Tosei News

#### WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE - MARCH

Theme: "THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S..."  
The service was written by native American Indians.  
More than 200 ecumenical groups in Japan are going to participate in the service. The offering will be given to Christian work in Asia.



## MISSIONS TO SEAMEN

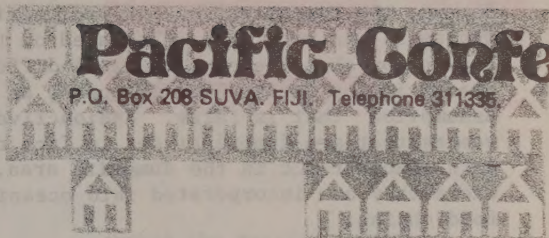
ports all over the world The Missions to Seamen offers a personal ministry to seafarers whatever their nationality and whatever their beliefs. It is there to meet them a welcome when they arrive in a port, visit them when they are sick and to help them when they have problems. Every mission club has a chapel and services can be arranged at short notice for seafarers about to sail. And there is always a sympathetic ear for those with problems, who just want to talk.

The Missions to Seamen does not wait for seafarers to visit the clubs. Chaplains visit every ship that comes into their port. And for those with no time to get ashore the chaplain will hold services on board. The Mission to Seamen has clubs in 85 ports where seafarers can relax away from their ships, have a meal, watch television. What seafarers need after a long voyage is help in keeping in touch with home which is why every mission club has telephone and postal facilities.

Nippon Sei Ko Kai has over the years been taking an increasingly active part in this work. There has been a Japanese chaplain in the port of Sidney, Australia since 1969 when Rev. Timothy Ishikawa (now Christ Church, Yokohama) went there. He was followed by Rev. Cedric Takeuchi and then by Rev. Gabriel Igarashi. The Rev. Lawrence Minabe has worked at Port Chaplain Great Yarmouth, England and is now also in Australia. In 1979 Kobe Diocese had a Training Session for Honorary Chaplains, and in 1980 Yokohama had a session for twelve Japanese priests from Yokkaichi to northern Hokkaido. They are now serving as Honorary Chaplains in their respective ports.

NSKK is also keeping the second Sunday in July as Sea Sunday, where each parish preys for all seafarers and the church's ministry to them. In many parts of the world the ministry to seafarers is carried out on an ecumenical basis - Fremantle, Hong Kong, Kobe, Antwerp, Vancouver and others - now also in Yokohama. The Rev. Al Stettner from the Church of Christ, Canada, minister in Japan, gives some of his time to visiting ships. #

from "The Mission to Seamen: An Exhibition" Yokohama 1980-1980



## NUCLEAR FREE PACIFIC SUNDAY

On Sunday, March 1, groups in and around the Pacific will be observing "Nuclear Free Pacific Day." This is being promoted by the Pacific Conference of Churches.

In connection with this topic it is good for us to be aware of the proposed Japanese oceanic nuclear waste disposal program. The Japanese government has announced its intention to initiate oceanic dumping of "low-level" radioactive wastes commencing as early as September 1981. According to this program, radioactive wastes would be mixed with concrete, packaged in 55 gallon metal drums and dumped at sea 400 miles north of the territorial waters of the Northern Marianas Islands. The amount of radioactive wastes to be disposed of is stated as one hundred thousand curies per year--more radiation each year than the United States allegedly dumped during its 24 year oceanic dumping program. The Japanese government has claimed, based on its scientific analyses, that the proposed radioactive dumping program poses an insignificant danger to people who catch and eat fish from the Pacific Ocean. A careful analysis of the documents on which this claim is based, however, reveals a number of errors, omissions and faulty assumptions. These flaws have the collective effect of vastly underestimating the potential health hazard not only to the peoples of Micronesia, but also to Japanese fishermen and to the Japanese public.

First, the proposed radioactive dumping is in clear violation of the London Dumping Convention of 1972, the international law which regulates ocean disposal of radioactive wastes, in that the Japanese dumping would occur in waters that are fished commercially.

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(Nuclear Free...)

Second, the concentrations of radioactive wastes in sea water are calculated on the assumption that these wastes will diffuse evenly in the entire Pacific Ocean, an assumption that is false. Radioactive wastes that are dumped at sea in fact remain concentrated in the dumpsite area, where they are incorporated into oceanic food chains.

Third, the Japanese evaluation completely neglects the role of bottom-dwelling animals and plankton-eating fish in introducing radiation into oceanic food chains. The U.S. experience demonstrates that bottom animals in fact play a major role in incorporating radioactive wastes into animal life.

Fourth, the Japanese evaluation does not take into account recent oceanographic data showing that deep ocean bottom currents are much stronger than previously believed, and that vertical migration of fish is also much more extensive than previously suspected.

Fifth, the "concentration factors" of radioactive wastes in marine animals that are employed by the Japanese are much lower than those which have been documented in numerous scientific studies.

Sixth, the Japanese evaluation commits several fundamental ecological errors, all of which would underestimate the dangers of the dumping program. For example, the evaluation assumes that the total mass of fish is greater than the total mass of plankton--the reverse of the actual relationship.

Seventh, the Japanese calculation of dose rates to people is inexplicably based on a release rate of one curie of radiation per year, rather than the one hundred thousand curies that will in fact be dumped. When the radiation level in fish is calculated using the correct release rate of one hundred thousand curies per year, the radiation exposure to both fishermen and consumers substantially exceeds maximum U.S. Federal exposure limits.

In view of the fact that the proposed Japanese sea dumping of radioactive wastes is much more dangerous than previously acknowledged, the Japanese should desist from this program and develop alternative modes of storing their radio-

active wastes. A simple calculation shows that all of the "low-level" radioactive wastes that would be generated for the remainder of this century could be stored on the Japanese mainland in single, medium-sized industrial warehouse. #

## DR. ISHIDA SPEAKS TO LUTHERANS

Lutheran pastors and missionaries welcomed home Dr. ISHIDA Yoshiro at a New Years luncheon meeting at the Lutheran Koishikawa Center in Tokyo Jan. 8. Just completing his third year as Director of the Department of Studies of the Lutheran World Federation, Ishida gave a sort of "State of the Federation" report to his former Japanese colleagues, followed by a variety of expressions of concern and hope about the LWF.

Ishida first named pluralism as a truly difficult to handle since Lutherans traditionally have been bound to a dogmatic stance. "In the future," Ishida said, "we shall need to see the wholeness and richness of the Gospel." He urged his listeners to be both social activists and evangelicals. In the misunderstanding over the Lutheran role on behalf of justice and human rights, he cited the importance of the Church's symbolic role in such activity, small as it is. The Department of Studies is now working on the root causes of poverty, he reported.

He went on to say that "Issues on feminism are no longer a joke. We must be pro-human; therefore, I dislike the phrase women's liberation even though that comes from an historic fact. Women largely are missing in church decision making. There needs to be an equitable partnership, not simply equality. Women should participate responsibly. Perhaps within the context of indigenization the role of women can be dealt with theologically."

How does international cooperation help "Our own identity" Ishida responded, "challenged by others. Our life-style called into question. For instance, it has taken outsiders to point out the sexism implicit in Japanese sex tours Southeast Asia. We must be able to relate to issues in a way that transcends mere custom. In the theology of the cross we discover ourselves."

-Lutheran Office of Communications